

571, 675, 642

Nupe FF52

[Information on bara-ship, the sacrifice of individual freedom for the sake of political protection by a patron, has been placed in category 566. --Analyst]

644, 642

Nupe FF52

[Information on the ticiži, the "Titled Ones," the office nobility of the Nupe state, has been placed in category 565. --Analyst]

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942

FF52 Nupe FF52

~~Let me conclude the description with the report of an eyewitness of~~
POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM 113
standing—the youngest son of *Etsu Masaba*—who had fought in one of 721
the last great wars of old Nupe, against the Kyedye. I have referred before
to the origin of this war. It was the answer of the central government to
the capture by the rebellious Kyedye of the town Kacha, which, having
submitted to Fulani rule, appealed to Bida for protection against their
unruly fellow tribesmen. It was, incidentally, also the last war in which
the Niger Company assisted the Bida government. In the next war
Niger Company troops were to turn against the Fulani, and (helped
by the same Kyedye) to defeat the armies of the kingdom.

Since the time of Manko, *goy* and Kyedye were always at war. It happened
like this. The Kyedye refused to recognize the Fulani kings. They con-
tended that they were independent 'kings of the water'. So Manko sent
his son Ibrahim from Raba to the *Kuta*, to come to an arrangement and
to stop hostilities. But the Kyedye killed the messenger, cut his body to
pieces, and threw it to the fish. Thereupon Manko went to fight them,
but could not do much. So the wars between the two went on and on.

Later, at the time of *Etsu Umaru*, the Kyedye attacked Kacha under their
Kuta Usman, because Kacha had submitted to the Fulani and accepted
their *agba* (delegate). The Kacha people fled to Bida and asked for help. 726
Etsu Umaru sent out a big army led by *Shaba Mamudu*. Most of the
gitsúfi went with him, and I was among them, also many *sarakífi* both
from the *ena Maiyaki* and *ena Ndeji*. We were three days on the way,
stopping twice for the night (Kacha is about 40 miles from Bida). We
made camps of grass huts; some of us lived in a *tunga* near-by. For the
great men we built huts with grass fences round. The army had guns and
men and horses—you could not count them. In Kacha the water was
covered with Kyedye canoes. We attacked at once, shooting from the banks
down upon the canoes in the water. The boats of the Niger Company
were helping the Fulani then. They closed the Kacha river in the back of
the Kyedye. The Kyedye fled, and we crossed the river in canoes which they
had left behind. The *Dokoyiringi* led the pursuit, accompanied by *Shaba*
Mamudu. The rest of the troops followed later. We pursued the Kyedye
on the other bank, both on land and water, for three days, as far as *Lafiagi*
and *Shonga*. This was a war not only against the Kyedye, but also against 727
Kupa and *Ebagi*, who were helping the Kyedye. All villages and hamlets
were burnt down, numberless men and women captured. We made more
than 2,000 slaves. Later they were all sold (although the Niger Company
had asked for the release of the prisoners of war). At *Shonga* the war
ended. Many Kyedye had been run down and captured or killed, but
some hid in the creeks and the river forest. The chief and the seven elders
of the Kyedye fled with their wives and children to *Ilorin*. It did not help
them. Emir Aliyu (the Fulani Emir of *Ilorin*) sent them back as prisoners
to Bida. Here they were held as hostages till *Etsu Umaru's* death. But
shortly after his death *Etsu Maliki* condemned them to death, and they
were strangled secretly at night in the houses where they lived.

In war, which is political action *par excellence*, the essence of state 721
structure must reveal itself most clearly. We observe what we have
recognized as an element of state organization: the monopoly position of 642
the ruling group with regard to the employment of the political machin-
ery, in this case military action. We see, too, that this monopoly of
control is vested in the ruling group *corporately*: its individual members,

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though they control severally the executive side of the political machinery, can only use it subject to the agreement of the administration as a whole (of which they form part), else the military machinery is directed against them as breakers of the 'king's peace'. Finally, wars are planned and the military machinery is set in motion by the ruling group as a *representative* group, that is, on behalf of the country at large. In wars against outside enemies the interests of the country and the people are perforce identified with the interests of the ruling group—expansion, conquest, or the destruction of a rival power. But in wars waged against internal enemies—rebellious sections or dangerously independent members of the government—the military action is taken as much in the interest of the ruling group (safeguarding, above all, the revenue) as in the interest of the state and the people in that it re-establishes order and public security. Thus in the Kacha war, referred to above, the ruling group, as the representative group of the state, protected one subject group against abuses by another. The government can take sides and place the political machinery at the support of one section against another only because it is vested in a group (as I put it in a previous section) raised above the heterogeneous component sections of the state. The monopoly control over the machinery of force thus reveals its twofold significance: as a privilege or prerogative, in the sense that it can be used (in war proper) for conquests and expansion, thus serving the specific interests of the ruling group; and as a constitutional duty, in the sense of being used internally, for the purpose of maintaining the 'king's peace'.

These two functions are not, however, securely balanced, and we shall discover the effects of this unstable equilibrium in the internal administration of the country, to the description of which we must now turn.

631 became too great. The towns or villages which were granted as such
 651 personal fiefs could lie anywhere within the boundary of the kingdom, on
 554 the royal domains as well as in the areas held as office fiefs by *egba*. The
 personal fiefs involved no legal or administrative authority, only the
 authority of levying an additional tax called *edugi* (small tax) over and
 above the royal tax, *edukó* (big tax), after the latter had been collected.
 There was no limitation to this additional tax, which must often have
 exploited the peasants ruthlessly. Yet I have also seen close personal
 attachment between villages and their lord still existing to-day, bearing
 witness to the existence of more friendly ties between feudal lord and
 tenants.

631 It is clearly impossible to state in more detail how this administrative
 554 system worked, and especially how far the administrative and judicial
 authority of the feudal delegate worked in harmony with the existing
 traditional authority vested in village chief and elders. Later on, I shall
 give more data about the working of this legal machinery. But it is easy to
 understand that the powerful feudal lord and his delegate could uphold
 political and legal authority by the very fact of their power and influence.
 They could, for example, secure redress or punishment where the village
 chief's limited power might be too weak to enforce judgement or arbitra-
 tion. But this intervention might easily distort justice rather than
 further it. As aliens, never linked permanently with the people over
 whom they rule, the fief-holders were bad guardians of tribal law and
 traditional justice. This, in fact, reflects the fundamental conflict in-
 volved in the system of feudal administration. The feudal lords were
 officially responsible for the well-being of their subjects; they were
 agents of a central authority which was vitally interested in the main-
 tenance of peace and order; they themselves, like their royal master,
 depended on the people of the fief for tax, supply of food, and supply of
 men for their armies and wars. But the connexion of fief with rank, in-
 volving as it did a change of the fief with every promotion, did not allow
 the mutual attachment between the feudal lord and his subjects to grow
 really strong and permanent—too strong and permanent for the safety of
 the king and the unity of the state. To balance the danger that might
 arise from a too firmly entrenched feudal lord, the kingdom had to risk
 the other danger of maladministration and discontent among the people
 on the fiefs.

642 This policy of preserving the balance of power between dynastic and
 631 feudal interests which had to be re-established and readjusted with every
 change of régime is reflected in the many changes which the administra-
 tion of the kingdom has undergone in the hundred years of Fulani rule.
Etsu Masaba, intent on building up an enormous dynastic power, divided
 the whole of Beni and Kusopa country, town for town, among his sons
 and daughters and other followers as personal fiefs. There was no place
 in the kingdom, the Nupe say, which had not its private 'owner'. The
 Nupe nicknamed this generous king *ndá na ma gá na*, Father of Dis-
 tributing. *Etsu Umaru*, who succeeded him, adopted the opposite policy
 in order to win the support of the native tribes against the feudal lords
 who had supported his predecessor. He abolished all private fiefs in

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

119

Beni and re-established the integrity of the Beni confederacy in the form of a royal domain. *Etsu* Maliki, levying tax upon tax on a country depleted by civil war, and having to defend a weakened kingdom both against powerful feudal lords and a restive population, invented a new system of government: he now applied the *ajele* system which was formerly restricted to the Outside Peoples to the kingdom itself. He divided the country into six large districts placed in charge of his delegates—trusted slaves, who, accompanying the fief-holders on their tax-collecting expeditions from fief to fief, collected the royal tax at the head of an armed force strong enough to cow into submission rebellious subjects as well as any too independent feudal lords.¹ When *Etsu* Abubakari came to the throne, he found all the wells of supply dried up. The taxing system of his predecessors had left nothing in the country that could be made into money—nothing except human beings. He started raiding his own provinces to find slaves for the market, breaking down the most fundamental distinction of political status, that between the citizens of the kingdom proper and the conquered *zafi kati*. But, my informant added philosophically when he finished his sad story: 'A gown is dirty—you wash it; behold, the water is dirty—with what are you going to wash the water?'

In this ever-changing pattern of feudal administration the capital stands somewhat apart, being administered directly by the king and his officers of state. The threefold territorial and tribal division of the kingdom into an innermost core, a kingdom 'proper', and an outside area reappears on a smaller scale in the division of Bida and its population: here we have *ba nin*, the Inner City, where the Beni of pre-Fulani Bida live; the Greater Bida, and finally the Strangers' Quarter, *lalemi*. But the order of status and prerogatives is not the same. Greater Bida included all the people who had come to Bida when it became the capital of the kingdom—the members of the ruling class, Fulani and Nupe nobility, with all their followers, hangers-on, with traders, Mallams, warriors, drummers. A privileged class here again, this group was free from all taxation, and this privilege also extended to all settlements which they founded, the *tunga* in the country, which were worked by their dependants, slaves, and serfs. The Nupe craft-guilds which had come with the Fulani rulers from the former capital of the kingdom, Rabá, were equally exempted from tax save for an annual 'salute' to the *Etsu*. To the people of *ba nin* the people of Greater Bida, Fulani and Nupe alike, are 'strangers'. But in the kingdom they themselves, *kintozi*, Owners of the Land, were a group deprived of all privileges. They were taxed exactly as the other peasants in the country; and so also, by gate-tolls and market dues, which were collected by the king's police force, were all Nupe from the country who came to sell their goods in Bida market.

Finally, there are the strangers—'real' strangers—of whom this cosmopolitan capital was (and is) always full: people from Hausa and Bornu, Arabs from the Sudan and Tripoli, Yoruba from the south.

¹ These districts were: Celpa (the country of Patigi), Gbakokpi (Badeggi and Kacha), Eggá, Beni, Kyedye, and Kusopa.

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439

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

121

linked with a title or name, encased in these *ekpa* which bear the name of a royal house, the group of commoners rallying round a noble patron, and the nobility rallying round a dynastic head—this is one of the most conspicuous symbols of the political relationships which rule the capital. 621

The political administration of Nupe kingdom (like every political administration) can be regarded as an organization guaranteeing order and security to the subjects of the state—individuals and groups—in return for specific forms of submission: submission of individuals to the established rules of conduct; surrender, by groups, of all independent political action; and surrender, by individuals and groups, of portions of their property in the form of taxes and tributes. The law-abiding, tax-paying citizens are thus promised protection against enemies at home and abroad, and general security for carrying on their daily work, holding markets, using the roads, and enjoying the fruits of their labour. With regard to individuals, a legal machinery safeguards their civic rights, that is, their claims to this protection. With regard to subject groups, we may speak of constitutional rights in which this safeguard of security is embodied. The element of reciprocity implied in these constitutional rights, namely, the promise of security in return for a surrender of autonomy, is clearly understood by the people. This is shown in the current interpretation of such political measures as the suppression of the Kyedye attack on the town of Kacha described above. The intervention of the central government on behalf of Kacha is positively linked with the previous surrender of autonomy (*a gba ya Bida*, 'they submitted to Bida'). 642

A striking feature of the internal organization of Nupe are the considerable regional differences in the completeness and directness of administration and the frequent changes which it has undergone in the fifty years of Fulani rule. These variations and changes have a threefold explanation: (1) They interpret, in terms of political status, the cultural and ethnical provenance to which we referred in the preceding chapter. (2) They are a compromise between the 'superstructure of the state and certain claims to autonomy, admitted mainly because of the difficulty of establishing a more complete control—for example, over the strongly organized river-state of the Kyedye, or over the newly absorbed 'outside' groups on the periphery of the kingdom. (3) They are a compromise also between centralization and delegation of power. The delegation of power represents an essential structural characteristic of the Nupe political system. The ever-expanding kingdom, increasingly dependent on the military help of the nobility, had to secure their services more and more by granting them landed property in the form of fiefs, and thus investing them with a portion of territorial sovereignty. But then, only through this indirect—feudal—administration could the expanding state hope to reach and to control its entire population, above all those scattered village units which never evolved a larger political system than could be fitted easily (like the Beni confederacy or the Kyedye political organization) into the large-scale framework of the Nupe state.¹

¹ Compare the similar situation in Imperial Rome: 'The state had to appeal to private persons of wealth and influence because it was not able to transmit its

642 But to 'reach' and to 'control' means often wholesale exploitation
 661 rather than protection and security. Here the fundamental weakness of
 669 a sovereignty in which political control is vested corporately in a ruling
 group, the members of which are entrusted severally with executive
 power, is clearly revealed. In other words, in the employment of the
 political machinery the aspect of duty towards the state is not invariably
 harmonized with the aspect of class privilege. Thus the peace
 of the country was often disturbed by the rulers themselves: one
 feudal lord breaking into the territory of another, levying illegal taxes;
 a royal messenger misappropriating tributes which he was to collect for
 his royal master; or a royal prince raiding on his own the countries which
 had paid their tribute and thus bought their claim to the 'king's peace'.
 King and notables alike would rally against the man who thus betrayed
 his loyalty to the kingdom. Punitive expeditions, loss of office, and
 heavy punishment were the reward of those who broke the 'king's
 peace' and committed what the Nupe call *cin amana* (see p. 110).

642 Revolts were quelled, raids answered with raids, war fought with war,
 and the 'king's peace' eventually re-established. But under conditions
 like this, protection and public security could be, at the best, only very
 unequal and unstable. The stress and tension of the system revealed
 itself in the various attempts on the part of the peoples of Nupe to secure
 better safeguards for their civic rights. Direct rebellion was the crudest,
 and, in fact, least efficient, weapon. Siding with one feudal lord against
 another, with pretenders against the ruling king, and princes against their
 royal overlord, meant obtaining, if not permanent security, the promise
 of protection and favours. Villages and districts could not choose their
 overlords or feudal delegates: but there are one or two indications that
 they could change their political status. Thus the villages of Sakpe and
 Kutigi claim that they obtained under *Etsu* Masaba, in return for heavier
 taxation, the legal franchise normally granted only to royal domains.
 I have mentioned the frequent efforts of the Kyedye to secure a semi-
 autonomous position. The Kusopa of Labozi, taking advantage of
 their exceptional economic position as the kola-nut planters of the
 kingdom, were also able to secure from *Etsu* Masaba the status of a
 royal domain equal to that of Beni and Kyedye.

PATRONAGE AND CLIENTSHIP

641 The privileges granted by one *Etsu* could be abolished by another.
 566 Security granted by charter could be infringed by powerful feudal lords.
 675 Where the group as such, village, or district, failed to obtain permanent
 security, individuals could seek protection of a different order: the
 declaration of voluntary allegiance to a feudal lord or an influential man
 in the capital bought his and his family's friendship and personal pro-
 tection. This allegiance, which often went hand in hand with the
 voluntary adoption of Mohammedanism, would be initiated as a rule by
 commands to the inert masses of the population in any other way' (P. Vino-
 gradoff, in *Cambridge Medieval History*, i, p. 653).

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

135

adopt, even more eagerly, the religious practice of the higher and highest classes, Mohammedanism. This is not 'real' social mobility; it serves only to blur the border-line between the strata. It involves attachment to a higher stratum only in the sense of external closeness and assimilation. 565

The assimilation achieved is irregular and of very unequal significance. Yet it is prompted by a definite motive running through the whole society—self-enhancement. The readiness of groups to identify themselves culturally with the representative stratum reveals an incentive to overcome that heterogeneity of cultures and groups in which we have grasped the essence of state structure. Potentially, this incentive may carry forms of cultural reorientation capable of wielding more intensive, more real, commonness. To examine how and how far this potentiality is utilized by the political system is to examine the crucial problem of this discussion: the dynamic relation between political integration and the heterogeneous raw material out of which it must fashion its unity.

BINDING FORCES

What then is the specific apparatus of control by means of which this heterogeneous society, severely divided by gulfs of culture, ethnic extraction, community, and class, maintains itself as a unit? And to what extent does it draw into its orbit and use for its own support these other non-political configurations and spheres of social life? When examining the political organization of the Nupe village from this viewpoint we discovered that there the basis of political control is extended to its widest possible limit: political organization utilizes the integrative forces of community life at large; it organizes into a unit what is integrated into the same unit by every existing institution. It might very well seem from our foregoing analysis of the Nupe state that here we have the exact opposite. A state machinery which concentrates political power in the hands of a small *élite* and ignores—save in order to transform into class barriers—tribal and cultural identity, seems committed to the narrowest system of political control: by coercion and physical force. 642 182

However, this section will show that such conclusions would be incorrect. One might, on general principles, reason that no state could afford to rely solely on coercive measures; and that it would rather utilize coercion only as a 'short cut' to bring about sentiments which, 'once established and sanctified, . . . may well flourish without compulsion, glorified as loyalty to a sovereign king or a national flag'.¹ A state that would disdain to call to assistance these bonds of inner unity seems to jeopardize continuously its safety, and to risk being shattered and broken up by unrest and revolts, possibly beyond repair. Such tension and unrest seems indeed characteristic of the political history of Nupe. But the historian would have to point out also that with all these grave disturbances Nupe kingdom yet maintained itself as a unit. Even when the Fulani took over the rule, testing most severely an already strained

¹ R. Lowie, *The Origin of the State*, 1927, p. 117.

642 political structure with the additional weight of alien rulership, the state
 482 did not break down but on the contrary appeared to have taken out a
 new lease of life.

Now we shall be able to prove the existence of strong trends of integration which form within the political unit, incidental to it or fostered by it, and which, bridging over cultural diversity and the rift of social and economic inequality, endorse in their fashion the unit wrought by political control. However, in our search for these 'binding forces' of more subtle and conciliatory type we shall discover that they do not all point the same way. They are indeed 'binding' forces—but what they tend to bind and draw together is not invariably the same group substratum.

182 We must examine first a significant negative instance—kinship.
 642 Kinship has no part in this integrative scheme, either ideologically
 602 or factually. No attempt is made to invest the conception of the state with that fiction of genealogical or kinship unity which is linked with the concepts of the sub-tribe and the village community. With the increased freedom of movement which is one of the results of political unification kinship relations become more widely scattered and marriage between distant localities is increasing and is regarded more and more as normal; but these new kinship relations draw only a patchy, irregular pattern that can have little influence upon the integration of the people at large. Moreover, kinship relations are often subordinated to political interests; patronage and the adherence to political factions may even break up family units. The widest gulf, between rulers and subjects, and between the *élite* culture of Bida and the peasant sections, is bridged only by the sociologically less significant form of intermarriage between men of the upper and women of the lower classes. We shall see later that full intermarriage is rigidly restricted and rendered specially difficult, unless it follows already existing political ties of patronage. We shall, in fact, have to speak of a definite class endogamy among the ruling classes. Marriage and kinship ties thus cement the solidarity of the component groups of the state, not of the state itself.

182 We continue our search in the economic field. Political unification
 642 carries in its wake expansion of economic co-operation and interdependence. Economic areas were re-designed in accordance with the new, wider political unit and its centre of gravity, the populous capital, which depends for food and supplies on the agricultural districts. But the contribution of this widened economic co-operation to national solidarity is negligible if not wholly negative. In this reorientation of economic links the boundaries of the state have frequently been crossed and disregarded: trade became 'international'; craftsmen, traders, and even peasants are always ready to seek profitable new markets outside Nupe, and even to emigrate for the sake of better business prospects. Economic interdependence and co-operation even introduce new conflicts and forms of antagonism which set group sections against each other. We shall speak of the village artisans who openly admit (and partly resent) the competition of the superior Bida crafts. In times of crisis conflicts of this kind tend to become more strongly marked. During the depression of 1934-5 I could notice distinct resentment on the part of the peasants

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

137

against the people of Bida, on whom they were dependent for the marketing of their produce, and whom they now held responsible for the disastrous fall in prices.

Legal unification goes a step farther. Dependence upon a common forum of morality evokes a certain group cohesion, a common orientation of mind at least in that all the component groups will share common hopes—and fears—and a common interest in whatever affects the judicial organization. If we can test the strength of economic co-operation by the facts of volume of trade and traffic and the relation between productive and consuming areas, we can test this moral reorientation by examining the measure of interest which the various groups evince in legal change. I shall show later how keenly the people everywhere in Nupe follow changes in the law. But I shall also show that this interest, all the more intense because such vital issues are involved, does not invariably foster the dissemination of true, or reassuring, knowledge: often it spells suspicion and fear of a biased jurisdiction and legislation. Whole sections feel themselves tricked and threatened by this dangerous law and reject co-operation with its agents and the groups which it seems to favour.

Dynastic and political changes engage the attention of the people no less strongly. When the late Emir died and a new Emir was appointed, and when the appointment of the highest royal ranks was to take place in Bida, the events elicited comments from many groups from which one would not have expected such interest in 'higher politics'. One day I was standing in a Bida street, talking to a brass-smith, when the *Kpotū*, one of the disappointed claimants to the throne, rode past. The brass-smith looked after him, shook his head, and said to me: 'It must have been a great shock to him when someone else was appointed *Etsu*.' In Kutigi, the district of the *Kpotū*, the older men knew all about the rumour of the *Kpotū*'s illness, which had been given out in Bida as an explanation of excuse for his not having been promoted to a higher rank. And in Mokwa, the district of the *Rani*, the elders told me with amusement of the abortive attempt of their District Head to obtain promotion by supernatural intervention: how he had gone to Rabá and prayed at the tomb of Mallam Dendo for the success of his political aspirations.

'Unity of interest' in this sense obtains also with respect to all things that affect the people, and the news of such events would travel fast from place to place. In March 1936, at a Bida wedding feast, I happened to hear girls sing a song the words of which sounded unfamiliar to me. I found it to be a new topical 'stanza' which referred to the activities of the Sleeping Sickness Commission which even then was working in eastern Nupe, i.e. Agaie or Dibo country. The song gave voice to the suspicions and fears of the people and their anxiety to escape, by whatever means, the unpopular treatment. The song runs as follows:

The needle is coming,
The Mallam of the needle,
The father of threading.
O let me go,

And not only for my money [i.e. also for pity's sake].

182 138
744
533

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

The needle killed the men of Dibo,
And also the men of Baro [a town in that district].
O father, save me and let me go.
If you must use your needle,
Do not let it bite me.

The 'needle' is the injection needle, and the 'Mallam of the needle' the native medical assistant who was performing the injection and who, according to the testimony of the song, could be bribed to spare the patient the (very painful) injection. The testimony, incidentally, was true; some time later I learned that one of the native medical assistants had actually taken bribes from the people, and had been apprehended not long after I had heard the song.

To summarize: political co-ordination calls into being a co-ordination of interest—actual interest units—which in certain respects overcomes the heterogeneity of tribe, culture, and even class, and includes the whole people. Yet as economic co-operation goes its own ways, often disregarding political frontiers, so the other forms of 'reorientation' may tend to further the formation of new, even antagonistic, groups rather than to cement the political unit. The 'interest units' are, paradoxically, units that spell disunity. The paradox is easily solved: the common interests round which these units are focused are such that they show a different aspect and portend different things to rulers and ruled; or to adherents of different political factions. The units which they create may efface tribal and cultural divisions, and temporarily even the barriers of class: but in critical moments they will only put forth more forcibly the existing disparities and forms of antagonism.

We turn, then, to another group of integrative factors which seem to succeed where the interest units fail. They wield integration which endorses unconditionally the political unit. The secret of their success lies in that they attempt unity and integration in spheres in which the political interests suffer such integration to exist, and in which the divergent political interests are overcome by some stronger incentive to unity.

182 The study of the unity which the Nupe state has achieved, or is achiev-
642 ing, reveals the effectiveness of two main groups of such incentives. To
186 formulate them tentatively: one is self-enhancement—especially a self-
enhancement that (in the language of psycho-analysis) 'sublimates' the
humiliating experience of political dependence and inferiority; the other,
the appeal of the mystic and supernatural. The first incentive reveals
itself in the progressive identification of the people with the cultural
values typical of the *social elite*; the second, in their readiness to adopt
new myths and embrace religious beliefs and practices, which are
vessels of political 'propaganda' at the same time. The two incentives
may join forces, self-enhancement being offered in the realm of religion
—as in the spreading of Islam, the religion of the rulers and conquerors,
among the subject groups of the kingdom. We can also discern the
agency of a third incentive, more unspecific and subsidiary in nature,
which, as it were, canalizes the influence of the other two, namely, the

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

139

appeal to an historical (or quasi-historical) turn of mind. I have already called the Nupe an historically-minded people: here is another bit of evidence for this bent. We shall see presently how under its influence ritual emblems become relics, and self-enhancement takes the form of exultation in past glories.¹

Self-enhancement, then. These are the historical facts: the Nupe state has bound its many groups and peoples to its own fate, made them share its adventures, its conquests, the fruits of its victories and defeats. But the element of compulsion behind this commonness of fate disappears in its mental reflection. The commonness of fate is lifted up into the sphere of things eminently glorious and desirable. The people are eager to identify themselves with the kingdom and its fortunes, and share in a collective pride that ignores the social and cultural distance between rulers and ruled. Even the wars which deprived the Nupe of their own rights, chiefs of their independence, peasants of their wealth and land, become a cherished heroic memory. I was discussing the role of strangers in Bida with old Ndakotsu, one of my great friends, and I asked him whether there had been any Kamberi, Kamuku, or Gbari among the strangers who visited Bida regularly. Ndakotsu, last descendant of the Beni town-kings of Bida, who never became quite used to the idea that the *goiñi* (Fulani) had robbed him of 'his' town, said ironically: 'Kamuku and Kamberi? Yes, but only as our slaves'—the 'our' evidently meaning a Nupe which credited to itself the successes of its Fulani rulers. When I first came to Mokwa my informants first of all showed me proudly the historical places near Mokwa where some of the battles in the wars of the Fulani against the usurper Umar Bahausha had been fought, and insisted on describing them all in detail, as if this were the most important thing I had to learn. This did not prevent them later on from complaining bitterly about the tyranny of the Fulani and their indifference to the fate of the people.

This new, proud consciousness of a unity which embraces the whole kingdom is kept alive by every song telling of old times and every story relating the adventures and feats of the kings of Nupe. With fashions and cultural practices, songs and stories spread from the capital throughout the country. The songs composed in honour of the king or one of his noblemen by the drummers of Bida find their way into all the bigger villages of the country. In Mokwa I heard a song which had been composed in Bida in 1918 in honour of *Etsu Bello's* first motor-car, the first motor-car in the country. I put this song in here as an example not of the force of poetic expression which it possesses (in spite of the uncongenial topic), but as an example of its efficient 'propaganda for the kingdom'.

¹ There exist also certain other subsidiary stimuli, such as aesthetic appeal, which we may disregard here. One may put the question whether these various stimuli are to be regarded as universal or as peculiar to the culture which we are studying. More comparative material is needed to answer this question finally. However, one can fairly safely say already that the appeal of the supernatural is a universal trait of the human mind, while the appeal to self-enhancement, and still more so the appeal to historical appreciation, differs in effectiveness in different cultures; it is eminently typical of Nupe culture.

182 the present head of the *ndakó gboyá* society, was invested with the pom-
 643 pous title of *Majì Dodo*, Master of the Monster, and with this royal
 794 recognition the organization of the society was made subservient to Nupe
 kingship. One after the other the heads of the society received their
 titles from the *Etsu* Nupe. Villages and districts which sought the help
 of the *ndakó gboyá* against witches had to apply first to the king. This
 new royal prerogative also entailed a considerable economic benefit:
 for the king shared in the income of the order which was derived
 from the gifts collected in the villages which had called in the *ndakó*
gboyá.¹ But besides tapping a new source of income the co-operation
 between *Etsu* and anti-witchcraft society meant adding to the centralized
 temporal jurisdiction the power of spiritual, mystic jurisdiction over the
 supernatural enemies of society. This powerful prerogative of the king
 was, in fact, maintained by the Mohammedan Fulani Emirs till very
 recently.²

182 Every performance of these various rituals and cults in the villages
 642 and towns of Nupe—and many are still performed every year, long
 797 after the disappearance of the Tsoede dynasty—revived and perpetuated
 the consciousness of this unity which has grown into far more than an
 external bond of political unification. With the Islamization of the
 country many of these factors lost their power. The Fulani rulers could
 use the secret organization of the *ndakó gboyá*; they could seize by force,
 as they actually did, the royal insignia from the last Nupe king. They
 could not transfer the authority of the former 'mythical charter' to their
 own alien rulership. But they could introduce another, younger, and
 perhaps more powerful uniting force, Islam—Islam as creed and Islam
 as education. Mosques, a *Liman* and Mallams in every village, these are
 the instruments of propaganda.³ And in every religious service, in every
 babbling little Mallam school this propaganda is enacted. Teaching
 Islam means teaching the holy cause which sent the conquerors down to
 this country. Praying to Allah means praying to the God of the powerful
 and sharing with them, if not their power, their beliefs. But Moham-
 medanism even becomes a real means of social approach between rulers
 and ruled. In a country still to a large extent pagan the adoption of
 Mohammedanism creates something like an intermediary social stratum,
 placed nearer to the rulers than the rest of the population. Formerly it
 involved—at least in theory—certain concrete benefits: an increased
 measure of security, above all, immunity from slave-raids (as the Koran
 forbids the enslaving of Mohammedans). This rule, however, was never
 strictly obeyed—unless the religious qualification was supported by the

[661] ¹ The *ndakó gboyá* society soon became a means of ruthless exploitation. The
 king and the members of the society were extorting money from the peasants all
 over the country on the grounds of ridding their villages of witches. This became
 so intolerable that eventually the Administration of Bida Emirate had to forbid
 all performances of the *ndakó gboyá*. (For a fuller description see *Africa*, 1935, 4.)

² It is interesting to note that when the independent Emirate of Patigi was
 created by the Government this new Nupe ruler appointed a second *Majì Dodo*
 for his country.

³ Mokwa, a village of 2,000 inhabitants, possesses eight mosques, one of them
 built in 1934 during my stay in the village.

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

143

more solid bond of political protection embodied in clientship. Attachment to the ruling group thus fused with conversion to its religion. In the early days of Fulani rule hundreds of pagans are said to have flocked into the capital to seek out an important person as their patron and to declare to him—and not to the religious officers of Islam—their readiness to embrace Mohammedanism. They received their turban and sword, insignia of clientship and new creed in one. Of such men the Nupe say not 'they become Mohammedans' but '*a æ goizi*'—'they become Fulani'.

Whatever the true essence of Mohammedan faith may be in Nupe, and however sparsely Mohammedanism has so far spread, Fulani rulership did create, and is creating, another 'mythical charter' of the kingdom. It tries again, with its new means, to mould the religious elements into the intensive unit almost of a State Church.¹ The effect of Islam as a 'binding force' of the precarious political system that the Fulani have erected cannot be doubted. A striking example is that under *Etsu Umaru* the whole Trans-Kaduna revolted, refused to pay the tribute, and finally made war on Bida. The rebellious peasants crossed the Kaduna river, marched against Bida and almost reached it, being defeated at a place called Bidakoko, a few miles outside.² The whole Trans-Kaduna, that is, with the exception of one town—the strongly Mohammedanized Dabbā, the same town where Mallam Dendo started his proselytizing work in Nupe, and which now refused to join in the war against the rulers with whom they shared their creed.

The identification of State and Church is demonstrated in the annual Mohammedan festival, the *Sallah*, which is as much a pageant of the might and splendour of the kingdom as a religious feast. There are two *Sallah* feasts, the Small *Sallah* and the Great *Sallah*, separated by a two months' interval.³ Their celebration may be called the climax of the whole year's cycle: the two feasts give the months in which they fall their names—*etswa salagi* and *etswa salakó*, 'month of the Small *Sallah*' and 'month of the Great *Sallah*'; and to these the people look forward and look back, in the long-drawn preparations and anticipation, and in recollections and memories. The *Sallah* feast is like a Friday celebration on an immensely enlarged scale. On the first day the king on horseback under the state umbrella and surrounded by his noblemen and state officials, leads the vast procession to the praying-ground outside the town, where the *Liman* holds the service. After the service the procession returns to the royal residence. Here a great display of horsemanship takes place, at which the bodyguard of the king, his police, and officers of state parade before him and his guests of honour—the foremost among whom are the District Officer and all the Europeans living

¹ See C. K. Meek, *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria*, 1925: 'Islam . . . has converted isolated pagan groups into nations; . . . it is largely due to Islam that numbers of tribes are now, before our eyes, forming themselves into nations' (ii, pp. 4, 10).

² It is said that this name Bidakoko was later given to the place of the battle, because *koko a tsi Bida o*, 'almost they (the rebellious army) had reached Bida'.

³ The Nigerian *Sallah* is the *Be'ram* or *Id* of other Mohammedan countries, which feasts are also celebrated twice, as 'Little *Be'ram*' and 'Great *Be'ram*'.

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in Bida Emirate. On the second day of the *Sallah* the *Etsu* holds the great *nhó* of the year, a reception at which everyone who holds rank and title and every person of consequence comes to salute his sovereign, to offer gifts of loyalty and to receive counter-gifts expressing the king's favour. For two days tens of thousands of people crowd the streets of Bida and assemble in front of the royal residence—Bida people as well as peasants from the villages who flock to the capital to see the *Sallah*. There they watch their rulers ride past in all their splendour, equipped with their paraphernalia of rank; they listen to music, drum signals, and songs of praise; they join in the general rejoicing, made more joyful by the largesse and gifts of food and kola-nuts which a gracious sovereign causes to be distributed among his loyal subjects. Here, then, it falls to the elements of worship and secular display, inextricably fused, and supported by the stimulus of mass experience, to mobilize periodically sentiments of loyalty and the consciousness of unity.

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From these manifold sources springs that common mental and moral orientation which we call national solidarity and loyalty to throne and country. Here are born the sentiments of unity which, in the words of Lowie, 'flourish without compulsion'. They crystallize largely round the figure of the king, thus giving substance to the self-description of the people of Nupe kingdom as 'king's men'. Yet the king is not simply the state—the factors checking his authority, his varying powers, show clearly that he is only an organ of the state. Nor is he a symbol of the power and unity of the state in the same concrete and personal sense in which the village chief can be regarded as a symbol of his community. Kings have been deposed and exiled; they have to fight and intrigue for their position; they are subject to the openly working balance of power. All this is well known—too well known for the identification of the person of the king with the unity of the society. Loyalty to a personal king of Nupe is factional; solidarity and loyalty on a national scale rallies round the throne and round the abstract principle of kingship rather than round the actual king.¹

But the 'binding forces' are not wholly pivoted on kingship. They yield also a consciousness of commonness referring to the country as such, the people as such, to a largely abstract and timeless collective identity which no longer needs the sustaining symbol of kingship. These 'binding forces' implant in the minds of the people of the state the realization that, over and above tribal sections, cultural and class divisions, they form a single human material, living an identical life. They teach a new meaning of the word Nupe, which is the meaning of *nation*. Collective pride, otherwise vested in the tribe or the local community, and its counterpart, the aloof or critical attitude towards other groups and their culture, fuses with and is supplanted by the sentiments of national pride—patriotism. Co-ordination of behaviour loses its aspect of a dictated order sanctioned by force, and becomes indistinct.

¹ It is possible that this was less so in the pre-Fulani kingdom, with its undivided rulership, invested with ritual functions and based on a unique, automatic, system of succession. Here kingship may well have been accepted in a much more concrete and personal sense as the symbol and pivot of political unity.

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

145

tinguishable from the self-willed conformity born of a closely knit community life. The state itself becomes that twin-creation as which MacIver conceives it, and, with one side of its being, a community.

The process is not yet complete. Existing social divisions and divergent 'interest units' are not wholly submerged in the new consciousness of unity. Sociologically, the incompleteness of the development is visible in the reluctance with which certain sections, especially among the peasantry, respond to the cultural reorientation. Psychologically, it manifests itself in the ambiguous attitude of many individuals in the lower classes, vacillating between bitter resentment against the ruling class and readiness to identify themselves with its glory, of which we have seen examples. It is an attitude familiar in many societies similarly split by sharp distinctions of political and social inequality.¹ One might doubt whether this process of intensive unification will ever be completed now, with new influences coming in, new cultural and class divisions being formed which disturb the steady growth and blur the old border-lines. I do not myself think that this will be so. But in a wider sense the growth of the Nupe nation, even if it were to continue undisturbed, would never be complete: for the nation is a dynamic, not a static, unit, a unit which must constantly readjust itself and constantly absorb new 'raw material'—new generations, newly-formed classes, strata, groups.

The achieved integration of the state is then in some measure, like that of the village community, the integration of a 'multiple system of control'. Yet the state and the village community differ not only in the intensity and completeness but also in the quality of the integration which they achieve. We noticed that the 'binding forces' of the state appear in varying degrees of concreteness, from actual co-operation to moral orientation, and that those of most abstract appeal were the really effective ones. In this, I believe, lies the essential difference between the integrative mechanism operating in the village community and this new mechanism of creating nation-wide unity. Evidently, the very difference in size and numbers must play a decisive part. In the village all integrative agencies can address themselves to an identical group substratum, and can envelop it in the network of actual collaboration. The state, with its huge human substratum, its subdivisions and sections, precludes the full effectiveness of such direct and concrete integration. Direct contact and direct co-adaptation of behaviour is subordinated to indirect methods of bringing about conformity, through ideological persuasion. Actual concerted action gives way to efforts at securing parallel action, and 'common' interests in the strict sense are replaced by 'identical' interests. Instead of communal rites at which groups that in other contexts act as political units are welded together by the influence of religious experience, we have the spreading of common beliefs and practices designed to call forth identity of outlook and to foster, though not an identical group, a group conscious of identity.

Ultimately and rather surprisingly, then, the binding forces of the

¹ M. T. Herskovits has called it, by a suggestive term, 'socialized ambivalence' (*Life in a Haitian Valley*, p. 295).

182
642 state can be reduced to the fact of cultural assimilation. Yet it is not that random assimilation which is only incidental to the expanding state, and which only superficially obscures social division, achieving but an insecure, external, likeness. This assimilation is designed to carry the foci of cohesion and solidarity—ideologies, and the institutions by which they are sustained. I said 'designed'. But how far are we justified in regarding this assimilation and the incentives behind it as deliberately conceived and employed by the political system and its agents? Certain practices such as the encouragement given to Mallams proselytizing among the pagans, the reward of increased security held out to converts, or the engagement of musicians and poets to sing the praises of the king and the kingdom, represent actual 'propaganda', still carried out under our eyes. Others, such as the supplanting of a local cult by a 'king's ritual', must have amounted to the same in former times (in the case of the royal interest in the *ndakó gboyá* society it can be proved to have been so only two generations ago). Other forms of persuasion, again, may have worked through the unconscious mechanism of habits and views formed imperceptibly. Often their agents are men who have been in the Fulani wars or who have in some other way been associated with the ruling group and then returned to their villages, where their stories and memories aid the other, institutionalized, 'propaganda' of the kingdom. In a wider sense, however, they all are deliberately conceived and employed: they are agencies of an assimilation conscious of itself and of the message which it carries.

CHAPTER X

GOVERNMENT IN MODERN NUPE

OFTEN in the foregoing description I have used the present tense as if the Nupe kingdom of pre-British days still existed. True, this was to a large extent an historical chapter; yet it described a development the results of which are still valid and still mould society to-day as they moulded it thirty, fifty, or even a hundred years ago. I was not merely reconstructing dead events and past phases. The Nupe kingdom and its society still exist, not only very vividly in the memory of the people but to a very large extent in concrete reality. This is not denying the force of social changes, but stressing the tenacity of a social structure that survives although its contents have changed materially. The recent economic and political changes have affected fundamentally the 'contents' of the social life of the country, the main interests and incentives round which it revolved. There are no more wars, raids, and conquests; slaves and feudal fiefs exist no longer. But ranks and titles and state offices linked with ranks and titles, still exist. Slaves have turned into *bara* or Native Administration officials; fiefs into administrative districts in the charge of royal princes. That the framework of the political organization could survive almost unchanged is in large measure due to the Administration of Nigeria under Indirect Rule and its tendency to utilize as far as possible the traditional social system. But a stronger proof of the tenacity of the Nupe social system is the fact that where the Administration had departed from it and tried to make way for a new development the old trend broke through, undeflected.

Two years ago the Administration built a new official residence for the *Etsu* Bida, with a brick wall, an imposing tower, a garage, and a flower garden—an emblem of modern Nigeria. Incidentally, for all its modernity the new house is but a replica of the hereditary palace of the Nupe kings, with special *katamba* for the *ena Ndeji* and *ena Maiyaki*, for *gitsi* and *bara*, the *ena manzi*, the men of the *Etsu Dogari*, and the commoners who come to wait on the *Etsu*. Now, this new house was built on 'neutral' ground, outside the town gates, as a symbol of the Government's intention to break with the division into three royal houses, which the Government considered harmful to the unity of the country.¹ The Administration believed itself to have overcome successfully the opposition of the late *Etsu*. An old and sick man, he was reported to have said—and his words were all over Bida—that he had agreed to the new site only because he knew he would not have to live in the new house. Which was true enough—he died before the building was finished. But the new *Etsu*, who willingly took up his residence in the splendid new house, one day surprised the District Officer by demanding that his 'proper house' in Bida, in his 'own' part of the town, should be put in repair at the expense of the Native

¹ See p. 93.

GOVERNMENT IN MODERN NUPE

- 177¹⁵⁸ Administration. New house or old, in his mind the position of the
 642 Emir remained inseparable from that traditional personal link with
 the local town faction.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE EMIRATE

643 Let me describe the modern Government of Nupe Emirate, in official
 648 nomenclature, the Native Administration (N.A. for short) of Bida
 Division.¹ Out of the multitude of traditional ranks the modern Emirate
 has taken a certain number and embodied them in the N.A. as official
 posts, carrying a salary and to some extent also implying specific, new
 tasks. The salary is graded in accordance with the importance of the
 office, and the *Etsu* himself heads this new bureaucracy with a salary of
 £2,000.² The *Etsu* Nupe is still elected from the ranks of the royal
 princes by *gitsūši* and *sarakīši*, or more precisely by those *gitsūši* and
sarakīši who hold appointments under the N.A. The *Etsu*, assisted by
 a council of four, looks after the affairs of the Emirate; he watches over
 law and order in the country, carries through measures of administration,
 tries certain legal cases, and controls appointments to offices and titles.
 Advised and guided by the District Officer in charge of the Division, the
Etsu is the responsible head of his government. The agreement of both
Etsu and District Officer is necessary for every administrative measure.³
 The appointment of a new *Etsu* is subject to confirmation by the
 Governor of Nigeria, and in extreme cases the Governor may depose
 the Emir on the advice of the District Officer and his superior
 officer, the Resident of the Province. The *Gabi Seidi*, formerly the head-
 slave of the *Etsu*, is to-day the official messenger between the Emir's
 residence and the Divisional Office.

645 The *Etsu*'s council consists to-day of the following members: the
Ndeji, *Maiyaki*, *Nágya*, and *Etsu Tafī*. The *Ndeji*, the old 'Father of the
 Town', is the 'president' of the council. The *Maiyaki*, from a 'Minister
 of War', has become a 'Minister of Public Works' and a representative
 of the *Etsu* on tours of inspection. The *Nágya*, a royal prince, was
 formerly District Head of Mokwa, and was then co-opted into the
 council for the ability which he had shown in the administration of his
 district. The *Etsu Tafī*, finally, was taken into the council in 1931, after
 the Bida disturbances, as an official representative of the *talakawa* (this
 is the Hausa form of *talakāši*, commoners), who formerly had no voice
 in the management of state affairs. I may say a few words about this
 appointment. Justified as was its aim, the appointment itself seems
 rather problematic. It was justified officially on the grounds that the

¹ The Administration of the other Provinces and Divisions where sections of the Nupe tribe are living is organized on identical lines; we may disregard them here.

² These were the salaries of the *Etsu* and the higher officials of the N.A. in 1934-6: *Etsu* £2,000; *Ndeji*, *Maiyaki* £180; *Nágya*, *Etsu Tafī* £120; District Heads £150; Chief *Alkali* of Bida £180.

³ No fixed rule can be laid down as regards the relative share of responsibility and initiative in this co-operation of District Officer and Emir. It varies considerably with the personalities of these two men, and also with the general trend of policy that might obtain in the Province at a given time.

853 This is tested by an ant (chinaka) being placed therein, and
 787 if it drowns the child is given to a wet-nurse and the mother
 is medically treated. This custom is particularly prevalent
 amongst riverain Nupe.

855 Subsequent children are thoroughly spoilt until they reach
 543 the age of three or four years when, amongst the well-to-do, at
 all events, the mother is thought to be too fond to make a good
 guardian. Girls are usually weaned at the age of three years,

[84] boys not until they are four. The children may, therefore, be

855 sent right away to a boarding school for some ten years, or

874 the relations may take them to a day school, arranging their

593 marriages, and in fact divorcing them so entirely from their own

parents that the only connection left is inheritance. If the
 grandfather is alive he distributes the children amongst their
 uncles and aunts on the male side, generally in order of seniority.
 They call them father and mother, and when grown-up would visit
 them and give them money before going to their true parents. The
 foster-parents would equally go to their foster children for support
 in their old age, and only to their own children in the last resort.

874 A successful Mallam will have a school containing fifty or
 sixty children, amongst whom he keeps up a rigid discipline
 by means of the rod, and if a child attempts to run away it is
 put into leg-irons. There are whole holidays on Thursdays
 and Fridays, but on working days the hours are 4 to 6 and
 7 to 11 a.m., and 2 to 4 and 7 to 8 p.m. Day scholars
 miss the first two hours. The children learn the Koran,
 and reading and writing in Arabic characters, then their
 own language, and then Hausa; sewing, and at a later stage
 sums. Boys and girls work and play together, but when girls
 reach a marriageable age they are taught by the Mallam's wives.
 There are no regular holidays, and children remain for some ten
 years without a break. When they leave the school the Mallam

[87] receives a fee of 20,000 cowries, in addition to which there may
 or may not be complimentary presents given. The young scholar,
 on reaching home, goes to salute the Sarki and all elders, and
 receives a dash from each to celebrate the home-coming.

643 The same customs that apply to the commoner apply to the

874 Chiefs and Emirs. His children are also sent to school, and he

855 never keeps his first-born. In questions of marriage it is he

581 who takes the first step, and he will often give his daughters in

marriage to the merest talaka, and may even marry a peasant
 girl himself without incurring reproach.

642 The Emir of Bida keeps up an elaborate state. He sends food to
 all visitors to his capital and provides them with accommodation.
 He summons Chiefs to audiences, and holds a levee in the palace
 courtyard every Friday morning between 7 and 8 a.m., where all
 or any of his subjects assemble to salute him but he does
 not enter into conversation with anyone then.

174 Nos. 142-144]

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[September, 1935.

631 weapon so well suited to their hands. And in their small 'state within the state' this jurisdiction
693 over the 'King's Highway' was still working, a true if smaller copy of the old system, some thirty
or forty years ago.

IV.

681 The *ledu* villages are, as we have seen, linked with the king's person by special sacred links;
693 they are made to share the king's guardianship over the law; they thus visibly represent, and almost
642 propagate, the supreme power of the king at what we are tempted to call 'strategic' places. And
in this, it seems to me, an important general sociological issue is involved. Strict centralization
of legal power, however strong a machinery for political integration it seems, always harbours a
disintegrative element as well. For it tends to separate the crime as actually committed from the
final act of justice. The element of retaliation and atonement, so essential to the savage mind,
becomes meaningless where the criminal is tried and punished a hundred miles away, and
by people who are, practically, strangers. The individual community is deprived of one of the most
powerful elements of social cohesion, namely, the title to sanction the violation of its laws and of its
social order within its own boundaries. It appears to be the meaning of the *ledu* organization to
neutralise this influence for that vital area of the Niger valley. For the most conspicuous, final,
phase of jurisdiction is returned to a certain extent to the individual community. It is true
this applies only to a few selected places. But we remember their surprising regular distribution
on the river; and also the rule that the *ledu* village nearest to the place of the crime had to be called
upon to perform the execution. These villages are 'representative' places, and 'strategic' places,
and their selection is backed by the strongest charter: mythical and religious belief.

S. F. NADEL.

[P. 132]